

Remarks

This reply is responsive to the Office communication mailed March 15, 2006. Page and paragraph references are to that communication unless otherwise stated.

Claims 1-23 again stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Edberg et al. U.S. Patent 5,793,381 (“Edberg”) (page 3, ¶ 5), while claims 24-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Edberg in view of Nishida U.S. Patent 5,321,421 (“Nishida”) (page 14, ¶ 7). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Since the rejection of claims 24-27 is predicated upon the base rejection of claims 1-23, it is sufficient for the purposes of this response to address this base rejection and, in particular, the sufficiency of Edberg as a reference.

Edberg describes a so-called Unicode converter for converting between various character encodings with what is termed “round trip fidelity”, so that a conversion from encoding A to encoding B and then back again will regenerate the original character sequence. The Examiner points to a mapping table 414 (Fig. 5) with various segments 502, 504, 506, each of which is devoted to text elements of a given character length. In addition to normal lookup in the mapping tables, there is fallback handling performed by a fallback handler 418 (Fig. 4), which comes into play if a conversion code is not found in the mapping table and the caller has requested fallback handling (Fig. 7, steps 710-716; col. 15, lines 16-43).

As applicant has previously pointed out, in Edberg this exception handling is triggered by failure to find an entry in the mapping table corresponding to a text element (col. 15, lines 16-17). It is not triggered by finding a corresponding entry, but having that entry contain an exception handling element, as in applicant’s claimed system.

The Examiner argues, however, that exception handling in Edberg is triggered by having an entry contain an exception handling element, “as in applicant’s claimed system” (page 2, ¶ 3). The Examiner correctly notes that “whereas applicant has a second element for each element,

Edberg only has an entry in the mapping table for text element[s] that are handled normally” (id.). However, the Examiner argues:

Edberg et al. teach creating mapping tables with the respective codes for the characters and setting a flag if special consideration is needed for the character conversion in the mapping table. These special considerations include variants, based upon the context of the character, for use in the code conversion system. These variants act as exceptions in handling the indicated characters.

Id. (emphasis added).

The Examiner is referring here to that feature of Edberg, whereby the mapping tables 414 “can also specify several possible output sequences for a single input sequence, with the particular output sequence determined by attributes such as direction, context and symmetric swapping state” (col. 11, lines 19-23). While this feature does indeed use a flag, it is a general flag, contained in the header 500 (Fig. 5) of the mapping table 414 (col. 13, lines 40-47), not a flag for a particular entry. And while the Examiner cites column 11, lines 28-39, for “setting a flag if special consideration is needed” (page 6), that paragraph discusses information needed by the mapping tables 414, not information provided by the mapping tables as in applicant’s claimed system.

Thus, Edberg does not split a set of elements into a first subset consisting of such elements that are translated to a particular element of a second set and a second subset consisting of the remaining elements of the first set, as claimed by applicant. Nor is each element belonging to a first subset of a mapping table 414 assigned to a respective element of a second set and all elements of a second subset assigned to an exception handling element, as further claimed by applicant. Rather, all entries in a particular mapping table 414 either have a fixed mapping or a context-dependent mapping, as determined by a general flag in the table header 500 (col. 11, lines 19-23; col. 13, lines 40-47). Accordingly, Edberg neither anticipates nor renders obvious applicant’s claimed invention as defined in claims 1-27.

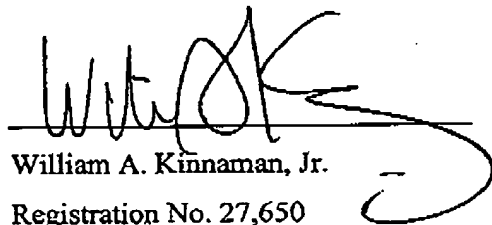
Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1-27 are believed to distinguish patentably over the art cited by the Examiner.

Entry of this response and reconsideration of the application in the light of the foregoing remarks are respectfully requested. It is hoped that upon such consideration, the Examiner will hold all claims allowable and pass the case to issue at an early date. Such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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